

Big Hollow Wetland Mitigation Bank Meeting  
January 30, 2017  
10:00am – 11:00am

Web Meeting: **Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)**  
Call-in (Meeting) Number: **Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)**  
Access Code: **Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)**  
Security: **Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)**

1) Introductions

-USACE	-EPA – Sue Elston (IRT Member)
Todd Vesperman SE Section Chief	-Sponsor – Dale Clark
Leslie Day – Mitigation Bank Coordinator	-Stantec - Jeff Kramer & Bill Poole
Steve Eggers – Ecologist	-Montgomery & Assoc. - Steve
Kerrie Hauser – Project Manager	-WisDOT BOA
-WDNR	Matt Malicki – Project Manager
Pam Schense – Bank Coordinator	Scott Brummond – Section Chief
Pat Trochlell - Ecologist	-USDA (Chip)
-Tri-County Airport – Mark Higgs	Chip Lovell – Wildlife Biologist
-The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Eric Mark	

2) General Overview – can we work out the wildlife issues or not?

-Current Status (USACE) We would need a Operation & Maintenance Plan for wildlife (O&M plan) that does not conflict with the needs of a wetland (one example was removal of hydrology as a means to manage wildlife), the plan would also need to be reviewed by our office of council before moving forward.

-Design Considerations (Sponsor/Stantec) The proposed bank is an approximately 150 acre site. The site historically has had flooding and so a large regional drainage ditch was constructed in SW portion of the project area designed to handle a 50 year flood event. The bank project is intended to handle a dynamic wet prairie system, with no inundation anticipated or impoundments proposed and all water would still leave the site to the ditch. This would be accomplished by shallow 6-inch scrapes which will spread the water out across the site. The project does not intend inundation for more than a few days which is what happens now. TNC is interested because it will complement the Spring Green Preserve across the street which they manage.

3) Airport Wildlife Management Plan/Concerns Tri-County Airport/USDA/BOA

There is no current wildlife management plan for the airport

- They did receive a permit to harass and shoot wildlife that were a threat to aircraft safety after the 2008 flooding. Once the area dried up and returned to agricultural production they no longer had a wildlife issue.

The airport is concerned with the long-term wildlife management of the proposed bank.

- What happens after all the credits are sold
- Who will continue to monitor / manage the bank for wildlife
- Would like assurances that it would be actively managed/enforced in perpetuity

WisDOT BOA relies on USDA for recommendations on potential hazards and mitigation of these hazards for wildlife management as it relates to airports.

USDA – Chip Lovell has visited the site and met with the Bank Sponsor and the Airport. He thinks that by implementing an O & M plan that wildlife numbers would remain the same or be lower. But his biggest concern is the enforcement and/or oversight of the O & M plan long term. The airport cannot enforce or provide oversight of the project.

Sponsor – Intends to donate the bank to another party, maybe TNC, once completed.

- 4) Operations and Maintenance Plan All
- Potential conflicts with Conservation Easement
  - Compatibility – Long Term Management (LTM)
  - Enforcement

Leslie (USACE): We have to look at this with OC but ultimately the Corps may be the only one with enforcement authority, we'd need to know what would have to be in the O & M plan (below), look at potential conflicts with Conservation Easement (CE) and long term management goals of the bank, funding, etc. and make a decision on whether we want to take on that responsibility to enforce, based on recommendation from OC. If the O & M plan requires dewatering/deconstruction that's likely a no go for us, if it's just management and there is funding set aside we might be ok with it, we just have to figure out

-USDA has staff to help develop the O & M plan, BOA/USDA can do surveys, surveys early on (now) to establish baseline conditions and then survey continued during monitoring period, then long-term a periodic survey schedule. He has examples for O & M plans that he will send out this week.

-Pat Trochlell (WDNR) Has there been a survey of Sandhill cranes which love ag fields, this is a major migration route? – Scott says there is only one statewide survey conducted in the spring during migration. Not specifically targeting this area – Airport hasn't had issues with Sandhill cranes except after 2008 flood when they got a permit remove them from on the runway, there are other areas where they congregate in huge flocks but that hasn't happened at the airport.

-Pam Schense (WDNR) Any potential conflicts with CE and the O & M plan would need to be addressed. Changes to hydrology or to the communities that are desired could potentially be inconsistent with the Mitigation Plan and therefore the easement. The WDNR does have enforcement authority under the CE but staffing may be an issue. The CE potentially could be used as a mechanism for enforcing the LTM.

-Jeff Kraemer (Stantec) Currently the town has the authority to manage the ditch if there's an issue, but they're not proposing to bring more water onto the site or to change groundwater levels so he doesn't think it should be an issue.

-Eric Mark (TNC) He isn't sure they want to be responsible for the O & M plan, they'd have to talk more internally, it'd be in perpetuity and they're out managing adjacent lands, but he'd have to check and see if they want to manage that as well

5) Next Steps  
-IRT Representation

USACE

What role does BOA anticipate having now and in the long-term? IRT

Sponsor/Agent: Draft and develop LTM with O & M plan incorporated, review the viability of that, funding mechanism (endowments/escrow) and future transfer of responsibilities

WDNR: Is the CE enough to ensure enforcement of a O & M plan? DNR will discuss with legal and consider potential implications on CE.

USACE: Can we enforce a O & M plan? – USACE is not likely to take this on. Will be discussed further with legal.

WisDOT BOA/USDA: will email an example O & M plan to the group this week.

TNC: Will consider whether they will accept the LTM and O & M plan responsibilities

\*Meet again March 6, 2016 to discuss once “homework” is done.

6) Other

All

-Will BOA/USDA be able to respond to a Plan once developed? Yes, so long as there's a plan and it can be mitigated

-Sponsor/consultant is comfortable with the technical aspects of the O & M plan, just have to figure out the legal aspects